Abstract
Research Issue: What is the best way to engage student nurses in online learning for sciences applied to nursing?

Background: Student nurses can find online learning a barrier to engagement with a subject, particularly the applied sciences (Koh & Daniel, 2022). However, to encourage recruitment and retention of students from diverse backgrounds, particularly those with family commitments, flexible access to study is essential (García-Camacha Gutiérrez et al., 2022).

Aim: To develop and evaluate a structured, student-focused online learning environment (OLE) to enhance student nurses' engagement with the materials and the subject

Methods: A mixed-methods approach was used to explore an innovative OLE, combining a survey with quantitative and qualitative questions about the student learning experience (n=52), focus groups to discuss the online learning experience (n=7), and outcome measures of student satisfaction and assessment from the applied sciences module. Some comparisons were made with previous cohorts.
Findings: While assessment performance remained at a high level of attainment, engagement with and satisfaction with the OLE, which was specifically designed to scaffold student learning and enhance experiences for students with diverse learning styles, increased. An unintended consequence of the new OLE was that it developed information technology skills, even though that was not a specific learning outcome for the module, thus better preparing students for the rest of their studies (Shennan, Smith and Chapman, 2026).

Recommendations: Academic staff and learning technologists should collaborate to ensure that module spaces are designed to structure and scaffold learning, enabling students to engage with materials through diverse media and learning approaches, thereby enhancing the student experience and promoting the use of different learning styles.

Key words: Online learning; science for nursing; mixed methods; survey; focus groups; learning styles

References
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